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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JOHN D. CHERRY, JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

August 26, 2005

Dear Friends:

We've certainly come a long way in 85 years, but while we celebrate our accomplishments, we should also redouble our efforts to insure that women and their families have access to good jobs, quality health care and better representation in government. I want to share with you some of the things my administration has done and some of the things we continue to work on and support.

Providing women with meaningful **Economic Opportunities** is critical to insuring that women and their families can enjoy all of the benefits that our society has to offer. **Here's what we've done**

- Supported enforcement of equal pay for equal work laws.
- Ensured that every state department, where possible, has policies to support flex time and part-time workers so employees can be successful in their various roles.
- Supported the "Cool Places to Work" competition of First Gentleman Dan Mulhern, *Crain's Detroit Business* and the American Society of Employers to recognize Michigan businesses and organizations that have created a family-friendly work environment that allows people to thrive.
- Created a new non-profit public corporation, Michigan Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), to coordinate state and local efforts to promote early childhood development activities in Michigan. The program will provide opportunities to stimulate and feed children's minds by providing every child the opportunity for high-quality education and care.
- Asked the federal government for an increase in the allowable post-secondary education activities as part of the TANF requirements to help women and men attain higher paying employment.
- Supported the Office of Career Development's programs to introduce students to career options representative of all career pathways.

Here's what still needs to be done

- An increase in the minimum wage.
- Protect fair affirmative action policies in employment, education and contracting
- Prevent changes in the Social Security program that adversely impact women who rely on this safety net.
- Ask the Department of Labor and Economic Growth to establish an Office of Women and Work to gather data, assist women wanting to start a business and provide employers with information and resources to help them comply with equal pay requirements.
- Oppose further restrictions in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
- Oppose weakening Title IX.

Protecting our Health is also key to protecting our futures.
Here's what we've done

- Appointed the nation's first Surgeon General and Chief Nurse to emphasize preventive health and highlight ways girls and women can engage in healthy lifestyles.
- Created a Blueprint for Preventing Unintended Pregnancies that includes increased access to family planning services for low income women, contraceptive equity- fairness at the pharmacy-for men and women and a new pilot program, "Talk Early, Talk Often," designed to offer parents help in talking with their middle school-age children about abstinence and sexuality issues.
- Protected a women's right to choose.
- Promoted the safety, physical and economic well-being and empowerment of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Here's what needs to be done

- Legislation to give victims of crime, such as domestic violence, means to maintain an independent source of income while participating in the criminal justice process.
- Insuring that all health plans in Michigan offer coverage for all necessary and preventive and diagnostic screenings, breast and cervical exams, and health and wellness education.
- Establish a Task Force on Cervical Cancer to raise public awareness about cervical cancer and HPV and identify new opportunities to eliminate this preventable disease.

Opening doors to **Political Participation** means opening doors to every aspect of our society. Michigan has a woman Governor and a woman U.S. Senator, but the number of women in the Michigan legislature has, in fact, declined. And there's more to political participation than holding office.

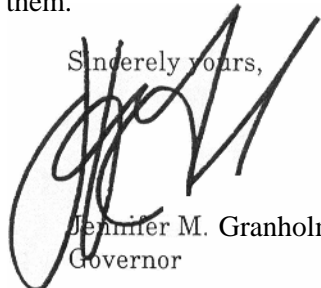
Here's what we've done

- The Michigan Women's Commission working with the National Women's Political Caucus, the League of Women Voters, and other organizations will provide training to help women run for political office and participate in campaigns beginning in the fall of 2005.
- The Michigan Women's Commission and the Women's Resource Center at MSU will be hosting a "Young Women, Strong Leaders" conference in the spring of 2006 to support mentoring programs for women of tomorrow. This also reflects the Mentor Michigan program headed by First Gentleman Dan Mulhern which ensures that all of our youth have ongoing relationships with stable, caring adults.
- Created a government of inclusion: 22 of the 44 policy leaders in my administration, including department directors, are women.

Here's what still needs to be done

- Election reform proposals such as no reason absentee voting.
- Development and use of a model women's history curriculum as a resource for schools to encourage girls and women to be in leadership positions.

Your efforts and your voices are critical to achieving our shared values and goals. I look forward to continuing to work with you on them.

Sincerely yours,

 Jennifer M. Granholm
 Governor